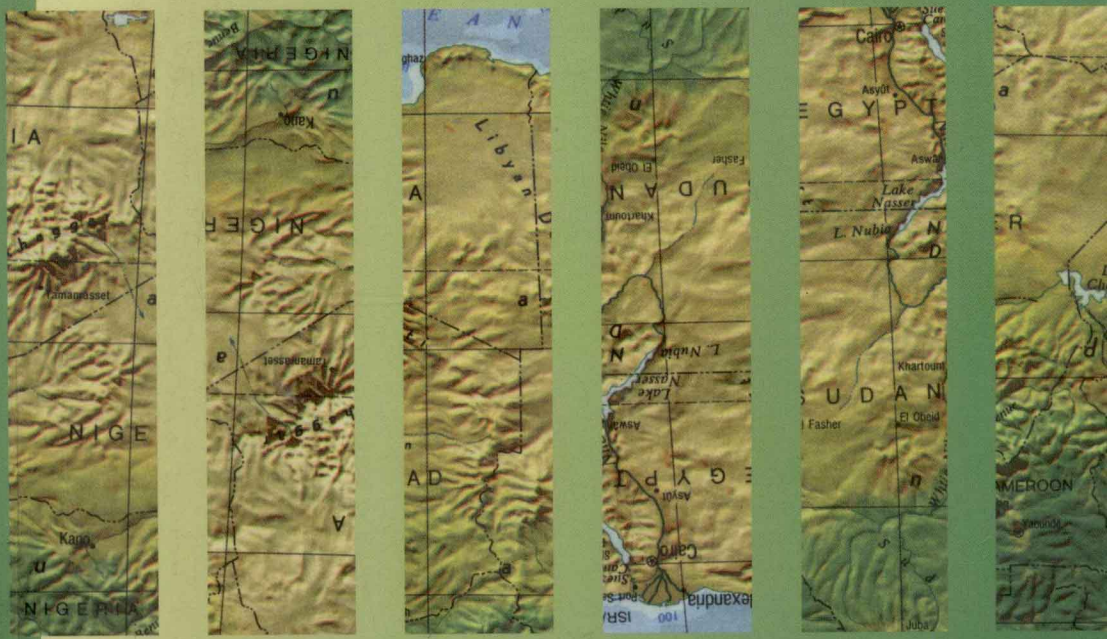
Global Environmental Risk



Edited by
Jeanne X. Kasperson and Roger E. Kasperson

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Note from the editors

The wellspring for this volume is an international workshop, "Understanding Global Environmental Change: The Contributions of Risk Analysis and Management," convened at Clark University's Center for Technology, Environment, and Development (CENTED) 11–13 October 1989. Under the collective sponsorship of the university's Earth Transformed (ET) Program, the Human Dimensions of Global Change Programme (HDGCP), the Society for Risk Analysis (SRA), and the United Nations University (UNU), the workshop brought together some two dozen prominent scholars from diverse disciplines and a dozen countries.

Workshop participants grappled with teasing out the potential lessons that the risk community, long accustomed as it was to dealing with complex problems beset by large uncertainties, might bring to studies of the human dimensions of global environmental change. Rather remarkably, they managed to prune an overwhelming list of worthy topics to focus on several key initiatives that required immediate attention and to which they agreed to commit their personal efforts. The workshop generated a series of recommendations for future research, which UNU subsequently decided to support. This book is the culmination of that work.

For Demetri and Kyra

Acknowledgements

The editors owe a great deal to participants at an international workshop, "Understanding Global Environmental Change: The Contributions of Risk Analysis and Risk Management," convened at Clark University in 1989. This sterling assemblage of colleagues – Harold Brookfield, William Clark, Rob Coppock, Exequiel Ezcurra, Silvio O. Funtowicz, Gordon T. Goodman, Saburo Ikeda, N. S. Jodha, Robert W. Kates, Ashok Khosla, Diana Liverman, Giandomenico Majone, Walther Manshard, James K. Mitchell, Elmer Offenbacher, Timothy O'Riordan, Cheri Ragaz, Steve Rayner, Kenneth Richards, Galina Sdasyuk, Kirk R. Smith, Michael Tiller, Peter Timmerman, and B. L. Turner, II – first stimulated the undertaking of this volume. Many of them ended up as authors or coauthors of individual chapters – but even those who did not influenced the final product immensely.

At a crucial juncture, Roland Fuchs, then Vice-Rector of the United Nations University (UNU), encouraged the preparation of *Global Environmental Risk* and facilitated that institution's provision of needed support. Juha Uitto, Senior Programme Officer at UNU, carried through on this original commitment. More recently, Dr Manfred Boemeke, Director of UNU Press, and Managing Editor Janet Boileau have guided the volume through the final stages of production. We also salute Heather Russell, whose superb copy-editing is evident in every chapter.

At our home institution, many people have contributed generously with their time and talents. Anne Gibson, director of Clark University's

cartographic laboratory created the handsome maps and other graphics displayed throughout this volume. Miriam Berberian, Betty Jean Perkins, and Octavia Taylor, have put up with our absences "to work on the book" and dispensed generous doses of patience, support, and humour at every stage. And our indispensable accomplice, Lu Ann Pacenka, has come through yet again and transformed another of our tangled webs into a real book.

In this book we have sought to wed two important fields – risk analysis and the human dimensions of global environmental change. The relatively mature field of risk analysis, owing to considerable experience in assessing and managing complex problems with large uncertainties, is well positioned to contribute to the analysis and solution of global environmental problems. We encourage integrated, holistic approaches to addressing the myriad threats to the global environment. In so doing, we invite others to join us in taking up the work of two visionary pioneers, who have boldly charted potential routes for confronting global environmental risks – Gordon T. Goodman and Robert W. Kates.

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